



News Release

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CEREMONY HONORS THOSE WHO HAVE OVERCOME DISABILITIES AND THE EMPLOYERS WHO HELPED THEM

(TUCSON – October 19, 2006) – Gary Woods does not let cerebral palsy and arthritis get in the way of doing what he enjoys most – helping others. And because of the support of his employer and the Department of Economic Security's Rehabilitation Services Administration, he can.

Woods is one of nearly 50 disabled individuals in Pima County and the surrounding area being recognized at the 19th annual DES Client and Employer Awards Ceremony. The ceremony is held in October in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month and celebrates the partnership between individuals with disabilities, their employers and DES.

According to the 2000 Census, one in five Arizonans between the ages of 21 and 64 has a disability. In fiscal year 2006, DES helped 22,000 individuals work toward increased independence and self-sufficiency through vocational rehabilitation and employment services, such as assessments, counseling and guidance, referrals, physical or mental restoration, job training, transportation, assistive and rehabilitation technology, school to work transitioning, and job development and placement services.

DES received additional federal and state funding in fiscal year 2007 that will help them reach nearly 4,000 more people working to overcome disabilities and find gainful employment. In those efforts, the right employer – one that provides the right job, guidance and training – makes all the difference. Employers being honored this year include Bookmans Entertainment Exchange, Sears, Mobile Outreach for Recovery and Empowerment, Safeway, J.P. Industries, Inc., APAC Customer Services, Advance Security, and Frys Food & Drug Store.

The awards will be presented by Tucson legislators, including Sen. Victor Soltero, Sen. Jorge Luis Garcia, Rep. Pete Hershberger, and Rep. David Bradley.

The ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. on October 25 at the El Pueblo Center, 101 West Irvington Road. Individuals with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations, such as sign language interpreter, by calling Al Zulli at (520) 629-0225, x244.

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